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Kenya

Biotechnology

Kenya Passed Biosafety Bill

2008

Approved by:

Stephen Hammond
U.S. Embassy, Nairobi

Prepared by:

Souleymane Diaby/Carol N. Kamau

Report Highlights:

Kenya's parliament voted overwhelmingly on December 09 to embrace agriculture biotechnology.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Annual Report
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Summary:

The vote established, via the Bio-Safety Bill, the framework within which the Government of Kenya may now devise regulations that will permit agriculture biotechnology use by Kenyan farmers, trade, and consumers. The President is expected to sign the Bill before January 1, 2009.

The most relevant features of the Bio-Safety Bill are:

- A legal framework governing activities (research, import, handling and export, etc.) related to genetically modified organisms (GMO); and
- Establishment of the National Bio-Safety Authority, consisting of 17 board members, to regulate all activities pertaining to GMO.

After the Bill is enacted, the National Science and Technology Council will draft biotech regulations. This process with the establishment of the National Bio-Safety Authority can take up to six months.

With the passage of the Bio-Safety into law, Kenyan scientists can go from confined field testing to start planting the biotech seeds for multiplication. Farmers can use the seeds to increase agricultural production and productivity. Finally, this will provide opportunity for Kenya to import genetically modified products such as maize to address its food security.